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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted at William Rainey Harper College (WRHC), Palatine, Ill., to determine reasons why 13% of the students who applied to the college for fall 1982 did not register for classes. A sample of 200 of the 838 fall 1982 no-shows was selected for telephone interviews. Survey findings, based on a 79.5% response rate, included the following: (1) 43% of the respondents chose another educational or employment option (i.e., 30.8% went to another college, 10.7% took a full-time job, and 1.9% joined the armed forces); (2) 24.5% failed to enroll because of a college-related problem (e.g., desired courses were filled, not offered, or offered at inconvenient times; or WRHC did not accept or notify the applicant of acceptance); (3) 16.4% indicated that they did not enroll because they were uncertain about their future; (4) 15.7% cited personal, family-related, or financial problems as their reason for not attending; and (5) 20.3% had definite plans to enroll at WRHC within the next year, 21.5% indicated that they would probably enroll at some time in the future, 33.5% said they would definitely not enroll at the college, and 24.7% were uncertain of their plans with respect to WRHC. The questionnaire is appended. (HB)

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William Rainey Harper College
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A STUDY OF STUDENTS WHO APPLIED BUT DID NOT ENROLL AT HARPER FOR THE FALL 1982 SEMESTER

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DETAILED RESULTS

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to survey a sample of students who applied but did not enroll at Harper in the fall of 1982 and to determine the reason they did not register for classes. The Director of Admissions and Registrar had requested that this study be conducted.

POPULATION SURVEYED AND METHODOLOGY

A list produced by the Admissions Office showed that 838 persons who applied to Harper did not enroll for the fall of 1982. By taking approximately every fourth name on the list, a sample of 200 was produced. The survey form shown in the appendix was produced jointly by the Office of Planning and Research and the Admissions Office. Using this instrument, the sample group was surveyed by telephone. After several follow-ups, information was obtained from 159 persons giving a response rate of 79.5 percent.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The list of 838 no-shows is taken from a total of 6,596 students who applied to Harper for the fall of 1982. Therefore, just under 13 percent of the applicants failed to enroll. The largest block (43%) of no-shows chose other options. Most attended other colleges. These colleges were for the most part scattered around the state with a few out-of-state colleges chosen. Major fields were primarily Liberal Arts, Business, Health and Science, and Engineering. Others in this category chose full-time jobs instead of attending college while a few joined the armed services.

The next largest block (25%) did not enroll at Harper because of something Harper did to prevent or make enrollment difficult. Most of these reasons involved courses being filled or not offered at a convenient time. Some students were not accepted in a specific program, and miscellaneous problems were suffered by other potential students.

Indecision led to another 16 percent not enrolling while a similar percentage failed to enroll because of various personal or family-related problems.

About 20 percent of those interviewed indicated they definitely plan to enroll at Harper within a year. Interestingly, 10½ percent or 21 out of the 200 sampled had already returned to Harper by the spring 1983 semester.

Reason for Applicants not Enrolling for the Fall of 1982

REASON	N	PCT
Went to another college	49	30.8
Have second thoughts about my future - want time to think	22	13.8
Courses desired were filled or not offered	21	13.2
Decided to take a full-time job instead	17	10.7
Was not accepted in the specific program applied for	8	5.0
Financial problems	7	4.4
Moved out of area	7	4.4
Courses desired were offered at inconvenient times	4	2.5
Personal problems	4	2.5
Went into Armed Forces	3	1.9
Did enroll but then withdrew	3	1.9
Decided I lived too far away	3	1.9
Did not know when registration was	2	1.3
Deceased	1	.7
Had a baby	1	.7
Got married	1	.7
Job pressures	1	.6
Transcript from overseas did not arrive	1	.6
Did not like attitude of Harper staff contacted	1	.6
Was never notified of acceptance	1	.6
Unhappy with instructor assigned	1	.6
Would rather not discuss the matter	1	.6
	159	100.0

Summary of Reasons for Applicants not Enrolling for the Fall of 1982

Made another choice - other college - full-time job Armed Services	69	43.4
Harper barrier - Courses filled - Not offered at right time - did not accept or notify student other problems	39	24.5
Undecided about future	26	16.4
Personal or internal problem - financial - personal job pressure - moved - other	25	15.7

Future Plans with regard to Harper

PLANS	N	PCT
Definitely plan to enroll at Harper within the next year	32	20.3
Probably will enroll at Harper some time in the future	34	21.5
Not sure	39	24.7
Definitely will not enroll at Harper in the future	53	33.5
	158	100.0

Other Colleges Attended

Southern Illinois	5	Indiana University	
University of Illinois	3	College of Lake County	
Northeastern	3	Elmhurst College	
Triton College	3	Iowa State University	
Northern Illinois	3	Morris	
Eastern Illinois	2	Western Michigan	
Oakton College	2	Judson College	
Kendall College	2	California State	
McHenry College	2	College in Minneapolis (not specified)	
Bradley University		Rosary College	
The Academy		Mundelein College	
Robert Morse Secretarial School		Western Illinois	
Illinois Institute of Technology		Prairie State	
Elgin College		National College of Education	
Augustana College		Rochester Inst. of Technology	
Joliet College		Not Specified - 1	

Major Field at Other Colleges

Liberal Arts	9	Public Relations and Communications	2
Business Administration	9	Secretarial	2
Nursing	4	Elementary Education	1
Engineering	4	Physics	1
Dental Hygiene	3	Hotel Management	1
Computer	3	Pre-Health	1
Fashion Merchandising	2	Didn't Specify	5
Math	2		

A P P E N D I X

SURVEY OF APPLICANTS WHO DID NOT ENROLL

FALL -- 1982

1- Why didn't you enroll at Harper in the Fall of 1982?

_____ A Went to another college.

Specify College _____ Major Field _____

_____ B Decided to take a full-time job instead of going to college.

_____ C Financial Problems

_____ D Personal Problems

_____ E Still enrolled in High School

_____ F Moved out of the area

_____ G Was not accepted in the specific program applied for

_____ H The courses desired were filled.

_____ I Have had second thoughts about my educational and career plans -- want more time to rethink them.

_____ J Did enroll in a course, but then withdrew

_____ K Other (specify) _____

_____

_____

2- Do you plan to enroll at Harper in the future?

_____ A Definitely plan to enroll at Harper within the next year.

_____ B I probably will be enrolling at Harper sometime in the future.

_____ C I am not sure

_____ D I definitely will not be enrolling at Harper in the future.

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